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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,138	11/25/2003	Mei-Ling Liu	LIUM3007/EM	4425

23364 7590 09/11/2006

BACON & THOMAS, PLLC  
625 SLATERS LANE  
FOURTH FLOOR  
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER
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MAGUIRE, LINDSAY M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3634

DATE MAILED: 09/11/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/720,138

Applicant(s)

LIU, MEI-LING

Examiner

Lindsay M. Maguire

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 June 2006 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This Non-Final Office Action is in response to the application filed on November 25, 2003 and the amendments filed on June 14, 2006.

#### ***Drawings***

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the "longitudinal notch having a upper side and a long lower side" must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner,

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the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,216,409 (Roy et al. '409) in view of U.S. Pat. No. 2,740,167 (Rowley '167).

Rowley '167 discloses a parquet block with wood joints having four sides: two transverse tongues (22, 26) having a width and two transverse grooves (20, 24) having a width equal to the width of the transverse tongues and defined respectively beside the transverse tongues so that the transverse tongue on an adjacent block can be mounted inside the adjacent transverse groove (see Figure 1).

Rowley '167 discloses a device substantially as claimed with the exception of requiring a longitudinal notch having a short upper side and a long lower side with a distal edge and defined at one of the sides near the upper side edge of the parquet block; a longitudinal tongue having a short upper side and a long lower side with a

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proximal edge and defined on a side opposite to the longitudinal notch of the parquet block to be inserted into the longitudinal notch in an adjacent parquet block; wherein the longitudinal notch further comprises an upward protrusion formed on the distal edge of the longitudinal notch, and the longitudinal tongue further comprises a longitudinal detent defined on the proximal edge of the long lower side of the longitudinal tongue. However, Roy et al. '409 disclose a longitudinal notch (5) having a short upper side (6) and a long lower side (7); a longitudinal tongue (4) having a short upper side (29) and a long lower side (11); wherein the longitudinal notch further comprises an upward protrusion (23) formed on the distal edge of the longitudinal notch, and the longitudinal tongue further comprises a longitudinal detent (13) defined on the proximal edge of the long lower side of the longitudinal tongue.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Rowley '167, in view of the teachings of Roy et al. '409, to include an additional locking feature on opposite sides of the parquet block for such a basic reason as to facilitate easier installation of the flooring.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments with respect to claim 1 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lindsay M. Maguire whose telephone number is 571-272-6039. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F: 7-4.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Chilcot can be reached on (571) 272-6777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Lindsay M. Maguire  
9/1/06

  
**RICHARD E. CHILCOT, JR.**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**

Accepted  
9/2/06  
*mm*



Replacement Sheet  
U.S. Application No. 10/720,138  
Group Art Unit: 3635

5/5

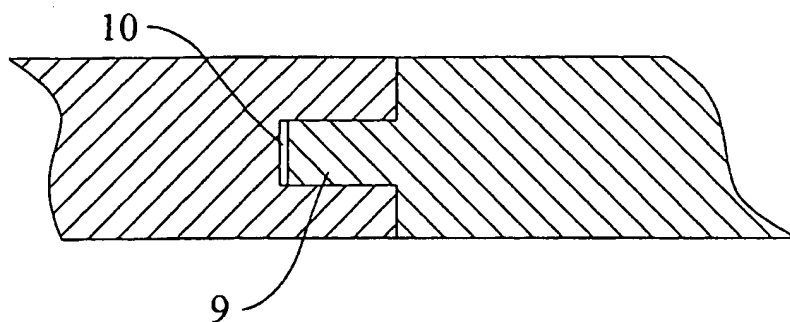


FIG. 7  
PRIOR ART